City of Royal City

City of Royal City Climate Change and Resiliency Sub-Element Engagement Strategy
March 31, 2026

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1. Introduction

Background

This Engagement Strategy describes how the project team will work with residents, partners, and affected parties to inform the Climate Change and Resiliency Sub-Element of the 2027 Comprehensive Plan. The strategy reflects early interviews with local leaders, educators, and community members and is designed to be practical, bilingual, and grounded in the local context. The strategy outlines the purpose, engagement objectives and techniques, roles and responsibilities of the engagement.

Royal City is a small, agricultural community in Grant County with a strong Latino presence and many Spanish-speaking households. As of 2023, 41.5% of Royal City, WA residents were born outside of the country, and 83.7% is Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates). Daily life is closely tied to agricultural, schools, and faith-based communities.

The community also trends younger than the county and state overall, with many households centered around young families and school-aged children. The median age in Royal City in 2023 was 24.9 years, which is substantially younger than both the broader local region and the state median. For comparison, the median age in the larger Moses Lake–Royal City area was 29.3 years, while the median age in Washington state overall is around 38–38.2 years. (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates).

Agriculture is the dominant economic activity in Royal City and the primary driver of household income and employment patterns Climate-related impacts on agriculture—such as heat, water availability, and crop viability—therefore have cascading effects on workers, families, local businesses, and the city's overall economic stability.

Economic conditions in Royal City include some broader income disparities. In Royal City, the median income for all workers aged 15 years and older, regardless of work hours, was $31,932 for males and $17,746 for females. However, when specifically considering full-time, year-round workers within the same age group, the median income was $53,063 for males and $26,250 for females (U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2019-2023 5-Year Estimates).

These economic realities influence how climate-related impacts—such as extreme heat, smoke events, or disruptions to agricultural production—are experienced at

the household level. Recognizing these conditions is critical to designing engagement strategies that are accessible, account for time and caregiving constraints, and reflect the economic pressures facing many Royal City families.

Decision Statement

By June 2027, the City of Royal City will finalize a Climate Hazard and Social Vulnerability Report for integration into the City's 2027 Comprehensive Plan. This work will identify risks and vulnerabilities, elevate community-defined priorities, and guide locally appropriate hazard mitigation and resilience strategies.

Vision Statement

Building the capacity of Royal City to reduce, anticipate, and adapt to climate challenges through local, upstream action that strengthens the wellbeing of residents and the local economy.

Approach

Guiding Principles

- Accessibility: Engagement will be bilingual (Spanish and English), family-friendly, and scheduled outside peak farm work and school hours.
- Trusted Messengers: Schools, churches, community events, and local leaders will serve as primary connectors.
- Practical Framing: Engagement will emphasize preparedness, safety, and economic stability rather than politicized climate language. One interviewee noted the importance of "leading with facts" and avoiding framing that feels ideological.
- Prevention and Upstream Action: The City will focus on early, preventive actions that reduce future harm and costs.
- Respect for Time: As much as possible, engagement will be integrated into existing gatherings where people already participate.

Interested and Affected Parties

Key groups include:

- Education sector: Royal City School District, teachers, students, families
- City government: City Council, Mayor, public works, water and infrastructure staff
- Emergency services: Police, fire districts, emergency management partners
- Agriculture: Growers, farm mangers, farmworkers
- Community and faith-based organizations: Churches, nonprofits, libraries

- Residents: Long-term residents, newer arrivals, Spanish-speaking households, renters

Tribal Engagement

Context

Royal City is located within the broader traditional territories of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. While city boundaries do not overlap reservation lands, shared watersheds, agricultural systems, and regional infrastructure connect municipal and tribal interests.

Engagement with tribal governments will be respectful, early, and optional, recognizing sovereignty and established consultation protocols.

Actions

- Conduct early outreach to appropriate tribal offices to introduce the project and timeline.
- Offer opportunities for consultation, interviews, and information-sharing at key milestones.
- Allow flexibility in how and when tribal representatives choose to engage.

Initial Outreach

The project team has initiated contact with Colville Tribes climate staff, including a preliminary conversation with the Tribes' Climate Action Coordinator. This exchange provided valuable early context for our work in the City of Royal City.

Key takeaways from this outreach include:

- The Colville Tribes are actively engaged in climate resilience planning, with ongoing work in drought monitoring, water conservation, energy, traditional foods, and community engagement — much of which weaves traditional Indigenous knowledge with western science.
- Tribal staff flagged water conservation and access to traditional gathering areas as major concerns. Development pressures — including housing and farming — are increasingly limiting tribal members' access to traditional foods and materials (such as bitterroot, camas, and tule), even where gathering would leave the land largely undisturbed.
- Early and ongoing consultation with tribes was underscored as essential, along with embedding access and gathering rights into policy rather than relying on informal practice alone.

Next Steps

Building on this initial outreach, the project team will:

- Share planning materials with Colville Tribes climate staff so they can review our process, data sources, and preliminary findings for Royal City.
- Follow up with the Colville Tribes' History and Archaeology department to clarify traditional territories and specific gathering areas in or near Royal City, and to understand how city policies could better support these uses.
- Integrate tribal considerations into risk and vulnerability assessments for the City, and develop explicit consultation and access language in policy recommendations where appropriate.

Pre-Engagement Findings

Community leaders described climate resiliency not as an abstract concept, but as the ability to “absorb changes with as little disruption as possible” and to “be prepared so families and workers stay safe.” Heat, smoke, power outages, air quality, and water reliability were named as the most immediate concerns.

Interviewees emphasized that schools already function as critical resilience hubs. During smoke events and extreme heat, “we talk about keeping kids at school because the air quality is better than at home,” particularly for families living in trailers or housing without air conditioning. Power outages were identified as a key vulnerability, with limited ability to keep students safe indoors when electricity is lost.

Agriculture was described as the backbone of the local economy and a primary pathway through which climate impacts ripple through the community. Changes in temperature, water availability, and crop viability affect everyone. As one resident noted, “if crops are not good, it affects owners, then families, and eventually the whole community.”

At the same time, Royal City’s strength as a close-knit and cooperative community was repeatedly highlighted. Residents referenced past emergencies, including volcanic ashfall and the COVID-19 pandemic, as moments when “people showed up,” shared resources, and filled gaps when systems were strained.

Objectives & Techniques

Objective ("Why")	Interested & Affected Parties ("Who")	Outcome ("Results")	Output ("Activities")	Techniques ("How")
Involve representatives from Royal City's key sectors in shaping engagement design.	School leaders, city staff, council, library, long-term and new residents.	Effective, culturally relevant engagement methods are identified.	Pre-engagement interviews; Engagement Strategy draft.	Pre-engagement interviews, internal discussions, mailing list.
Inform Council and staff about the process and its integration into the Comp Plan.	Council members, city staff.	Shared understanding of process, timeline, and role in Comp Plan.	presentations (kickoff and final).	Council presentations with materials and Q&A.
Consult and involve Community Advisory Team on technical issues and hazards.	City staff, emergency/fire, farm representatives, business, and organizations that serve affected populations	Validation of risks; prioritization of adaptation actions.	3 workshops, 1 technical activity, ongoing email updates.	Workshops, spatial risk mapping, MCA prioritization.
Consult and involve community members with lived experience and vulnerabilities.	Spanish-speaking families, renters, parents	Community perspectives inform vulnerability assessment and adaptation priorities.	1 listening session, summary notes,	Family Night listening sessions, bilingual facilitation, listening sessions

Implementation & Timeline

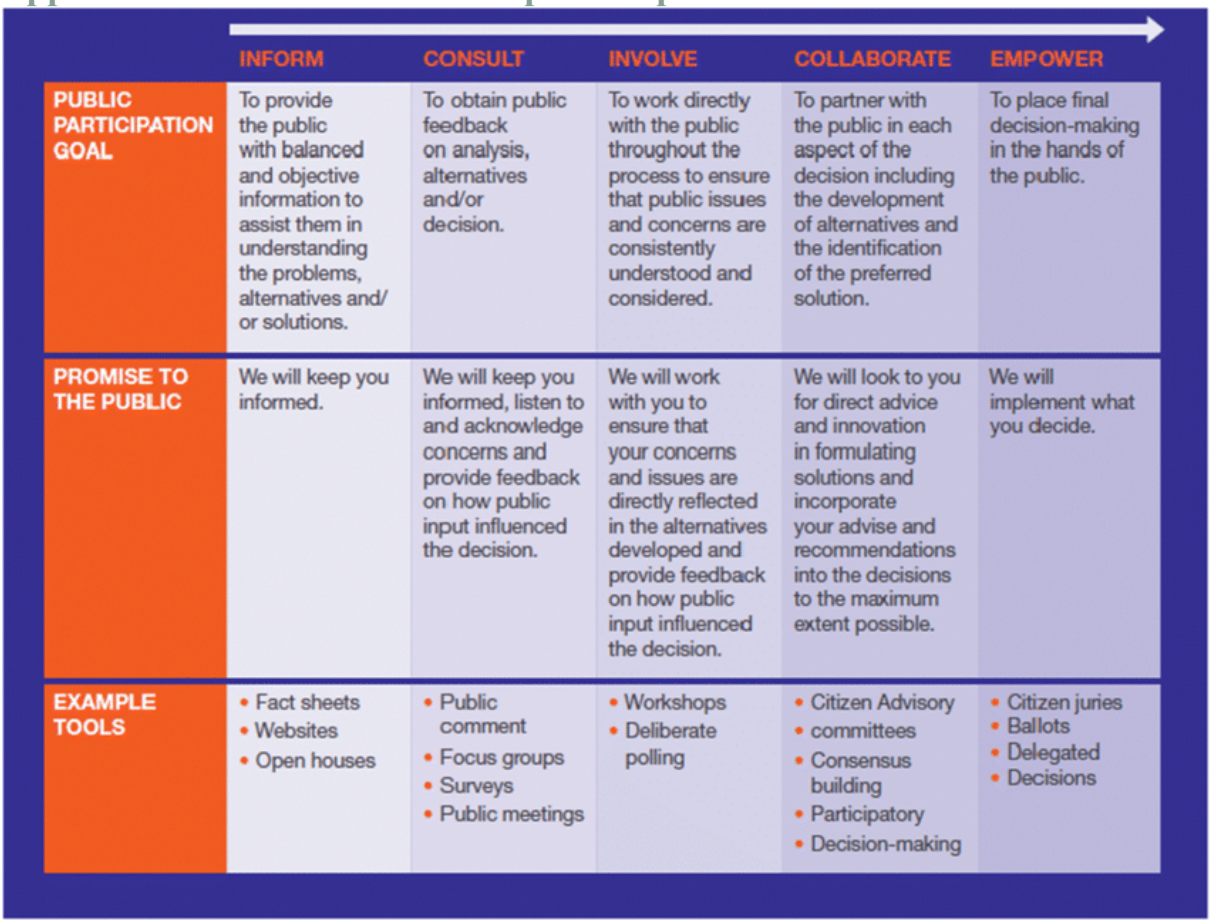
Tasks	Timeframe
Establish Public & Tribal Engagement Strategy	Winter 2026
Public Outreach	Spring/Summer 2026
Kick-Off Meeting	February 2026
R-CAT Feedback on Data (Community Assets & Climate Hazards)	March 2026
Community Listening Session	Spring 2026
Public Workshop on Data (Risk Assessment & Existing Policy Audit)	Fall 2026
Workshop on Final Goals and Policies	Winter 2026
Draft Participation Document	February-April 2027

Communications

- Bilingual materials
- Primary channels: email, in-person presentations, school and community announcements
- Messaging focused on preparedness, health, and economic stability

Appendices

Appendix A: IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advise and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLE TOOLS	• Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses	• Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings	• Workshops • Deliberate polling	• Citizen Advisory committees • Consensus building • Participatory Decision-making	• Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated Decisions

Appendix B: Glossary of Engagement Techniques

- Advisory Teams: Groups of experts and community representatives convened to provide structured input.
- Listening Sessions: Facilitated discussions to understand lived experiences of priority populations.
- Workshops: Structured, interactive sessions to explore risks, vulnerabilities, and solutions.
- Questionnaires/Surveys: Tools to gather broader input from community members.
- Outreach at Events: Presence at existing gatherings (festivals, family nights, etc.) to meet people where they are.
- Webinars: Online sessions to share updates and collect input.

Appendix C: Community Advisory Team

The Community Advisory Team (CAT) will include representatives from:

- Organizations that serve farmworker families
- Library groups and trusted messengers
- City staff

- Fire department / emergency management
- Local farmers
- City Council representatives
- Local business representatives